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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 000362

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GG](#) [EU](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: DUTCH MFA ON GEORGIA BORDER MONITORING OPERATION

REF: STATE 21669

Classified By: CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL COUNSELOR ANDREW SCHOFER FOR REASONS 1.4 (B AND D)

(C) PolOff conveyed reftel points to Dutch MFA OSCE Desk Officer Mark Verstedden on February 7. Verstedden said the GONL's view was similar to the U.S. position and shared the substance of MFA's instructions to the Dutch EU Mission for the February 8 PSC Meeting. The Dutch also support a continued international presence on the Russia-Georgia border. Their first choice would be to see a continuation of the OSCE's Georgia BMO but Verstedden acknowledged this was "almost impossible," so they are prepared to explore alternatives. The Dutch would like to have a fact-finding mission, ideally from the OSCE, sent to the area. Verstedden conceded this would likely face the same Russian objections as the BMO itself. If an OSCE fact-finding mission were not possible, then perhaps an EU mission could be sent. The Dutch hope that deploying an EU mission might be enough to get the Russians to drop their objection to renewing the OSCE BMO. Verstedden also said that as a last resort, the GONL was willing to explore options for a "coalition of the willing," but agrees with the U.S. as to the disadvantages of such an approach.

SOBEL